21st Century Skills

Essential 21st Century Skills1

**Learning and Innovation Skills**

**Creativity and Innovation**

* Demonstrating originality and inventiveness in work
* Developing, implementing and communicating new ideas to others
* Being open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives
* Acting on creative ideas to make a tangible and useful contribution to the domain in which the innovation occurs

**Critical Thinking and Problem Solving**

* Exercising sound reasoning in understanding
* Making complex choices and decisions
* Understanding the interconnections among systems
* Identifying and asking significant questions that clarify various points of view and lead to better solutions
* Framing, analyzing and synthesizing information in order to solve problems and answer questions

**Communication and Collaboration**

* Articulating thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively through speaking and writing
* Demonstrating ability to work effectively with diverse teams
* Exercising flexibility and willingness to be helpful in making necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal
* Assuming shared responsibility for collaborative work

**Information, Media and Technology Skills**

**Information Literacy**

* Accessing information efficiently and effectively, evaluating information critically and competently and using information accurately and creatively for the issue or problem at hand
* Possessing a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information

**Media Literacy**

* Understanding how media messages are constructed, for what purposes and using which tools, characteristics and conventions.
* Examining how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors.
* Possessing a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information

**ICT (Information, Communications and Technology) Literacy**

* Using digital technology, communication tools and/or networks appropriately to access, manage, integrate, evaluate, and create information in order to function in a knowledge economy
* Using technology as a tool to research, organize, evaluate and communicate information, and the possession of a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information

**Life and Career Skills**

**Flexibility and Adaptability**

* Adapting to varied roles and responsibilities
* Working effectively in a climate of ambiguity and changing priorities

**Initiative and Self-Direction**

* Monitoring one’s own understanding and learning needs
* Going beyond basic mastery of skills and/or curriculum to explore and expand one’s own learning and opportunities to gain expertise
* Demonstrating initiative to advance skill levels towards a professional level
* Defining, prioritizing and completing tasks without direct oversight
* Utilizing time efficiently and managing workload
* Demonstrating commitment to learning as a lifelong process

**Social and Cross-Cultural Skills**

* Working appropriately and productively with others
* Leveraging the collective intelligence of groups when appropriate
* Bridging cultural differences and using differing perspectives to increase innovation and the quality of work

**Productivity and Accountability**

* Setting and meeting high standards and goals for delivering quality work on time
* Demonstrating diligence and a positive work ethic (e.g., being punctual and reliable)

**Leadership and Responsibility**

* Using interpersonal and problem-solving skills to influence and guide others toward a goal
* Leveraging strengths of others to accomplish a common goal
* Demonstrating integrity and ethical behavior
* Acting responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind

1Source: Partnership for 21st Century Skills (www.21stcenturyskills.org). Used with permission.